

Message Text

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47

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 AID-05

FEA-01 OMB-01 EB-07 EUR-12 /091 W

----- 019436

R 070830Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7427

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

CINCPAC

UNCLAS JAKARTA 4101

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ID, AS

SUBJ: SUHARTO PRESS CONFERENCE ON TOWNESVILLE

TALKS WITH WHITLAM

1. IN BRIEFING APRIL 5, PRESIDENT SUHARTO TOLD REPORTERS WHO ACCOMPANIED HIM TO AUSTRALIA FOR MEETINGS WITH WHITLAM IN TOWNESVILLE, APRIL 3-5, THAT TALKS WERE "VERY PRODUCTIVE AND SATISFYING." HIGHLIGHTS OF SUHARTO'S BRIEFING WHICH HE GAVE ON BOARD PLANE ENROUTE BACK TO JAKARTA, AS REPORTED IN JAKARTA PRESS APRIL 7, ARE AS FOLLOWS:

2. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. SUHARTO SAID HE WAS ABLE TO PERSUADE WHITLAM OF INDONESIA'S CONTINUING NEED FOR FOREIGN AID TO MEET DEVELOPMENT NEEDS NOTWITHSTANDING GOI'S INCREASED REVENUES FROM OIL. SUHARTO SAID, "AUSTRALIA, UNLIKE SOME OTHER COUNTRIES, REGARDS INDONESIA AS A SMALL OIL PRODUCER WITH A VERY LARGE POPULATION, WHICH MAKES IT DIFFERENT FROM MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES."

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AUSTRALIA HAS THEREFORE PROMISED IT WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE

AID AT PREVIOUS LEVELS, HE SAID. (COMMENT: SUHARTO COMMENT ABOUT "OTHER COUNTRIES" IS APPARENT REFERENCE TO REDUCTION OF U.S. ASSISTANCE TO INDONESIA.)

3. PORTUGUESE TIMOR. SUHARTO SAID HE AND WHITLAM DISCUSSED PORTUGUESE TIMOR; INDONESIA HAS NO TERRITORIAL AMBITIONS OR PLANS TO TAKE THE COLONY BY FORCE; DECOLONIZATION BY PORTUGAL MUST OBSERVE WISHES OF PEOPLE INCLUDING THOSE ELEMENTS WHO WISH TO JOIN INDONESIA; AND AUSTRALIA ALSO RECOGNIZES THIS NEED.

4. INDOCHINA. SUHARTO SAID INDONESIA, LIKE ALL OTHER NATIONS, IS CONCERNED ABOUT INDOCHINA SITUATION BUT IS FACING PROBLEM AS "MATURE NATION." HE NOTED AUSTRALIA IS ASSISTING IN REFUGEE RELIEF EFFORT IN VIETNAM, AND THAT GOA UNDERSTANDS INDONESIA'S PARTICIPATION IN ICCS IS AN EFFORT TO BRING ABOUT SETTLEMENT UNDER PARIS ACCORDS.

5. PHILIPPINES. ON PROBLEM OF SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, SUHARTO SAID AUSTRALIA APPRECIATES AND RECOGNIZES NEED FOR INDONESIAN ROLE IN FINDING SOLUTION THERE AND IN HELPING PROMOTE STABILITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, IN WHICH AUSTRALIA ALSO HAS INTEREST.

6. INDONESIAN-AUSTRALIAN JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES. SUHARTO DESCRIBED INDONESIAN-AUSTRALIAN MILITARY EXERCISES, SUCH AS RECENT JOINT NAVAL MANEUVERS, AS CONTRIBUTION TO "REGIONAL RESILIENCE" WHICH ENHANCE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF MILITARY DOCTRINES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES AND DISPEL DOUBTS AND SUSPICIONS BETWEEN THEM.

7. ANTI-GOI FEELING IN AUSTRALIA. ASKED ABOUT ANTI-GOI DEMONSTRATORS WHO APPEARED AT TOWNESVILLE DURING HIS VISIT, SUHARTO DISMISSED THESE AS AN "ANNOYING NUISANCE," SAYING WHITLAM HAD EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACY SUCH AS AUSTRALIA EXTREMISTS LIKE THIS SOMETIMES EXPRESS THEMSELVES. SUHARTO ADDED THAT IT WAS CLEAR THAT NEITHER AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT NOR "SILENT MAJORITY" OF AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE SUPPORT THESE CRITICS.

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8. SUHARTO SAID HE AND WHITLAM AGREED THAT INFORMAL SESSIONS OF THIS KIND WOULD CONTINUE ALTHOUGH NO DATE OR PLACE HAD BEEN FIXED FOR NEXT MEETING. "IF WE MEET TOO OFTEN," HE SAID, "PEOPLE WILL CRITICIZE US." (NOTE: TOWNESVILLE TALKS WERE SEQUEL TO FIRST INFORMAL SUHARTO-WHITLAM SUMMIT HELD AT WONOSOBO, CENTRAL JAVA, IN SEPTEMBER 1974.)
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, PRESS CONFERENCES, MEETING REPORTS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, MILITARY EXERCISES, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975JAKART04101
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750119-1079
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750478/aaaactjr.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 JUN 2003 by RuthemTJ>; APPROVED <14 JAN 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SUHARTO PRESS CONFERENCE ON TOWNESVILLE TALKS WITH WHITLAM
TAGS: PFOR, ID, AS, XC, (SUHARTO, GEN), (WHITLAM, GOUGH)
To: DEA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006